(ix) Entrusting a Study on the control of transit losses to RITES to find ways and means to control losses in rail movement.

Statement

State wise Procurement of Wheat by FCI and State Agencies from April to June, 2003

(In '000 tonnes)

State/U.T.	FCI	State Agencies	Total
Bihar	Neg	1	1
Haryana	818	4304	5122
HP	1	-	1
MP	27	161	188
Punjab	2548	6390	8938
Rajasthan	137	122	259
Uttaranchal	5	62	67
UP	-	1213	1213
Delhi	12	-	12
TOTAL	3548	12253	15801

Hike in prices of essential commodities

2616. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of hike in prices of essential commodities every year and the reasons advanced therefor, like, floods, monsoons and drought, these being natural events happening every year;

(b) whether Government feel its responsibility to overcome such problems beforehand and ensure that there are no price hikes because of these factors; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Prices of essential commodities, as others, are subject to variations depending on the demand and supply and contingent factors. However, prices of most of the essential commodities have remained steady over the year. The prices are regularly monitored to contain any abnormal price rise. Government announces Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for cereals, pulses and oilseeds based on recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices every year. Natural calamities like floods, drought and deficient rainfall are also taken into account while fixing MSP to protect the interest of the farmers. The issue prices of essential commodities like rice, wheat, sugar and kerosene are fixed at a lower level than open market prices for distribution through Public Distribution System to protect the interests of consumers, particularly, of vulnerable sections.

Finalisation of accounts by FCI

2617. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India has not finalised its accounts for the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action proposed against those responsible for irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA) : (a) and (b) While the Food Corporation of India (FCI) prepares its accounts on an annual basis it could not submit its Audit Reports upto date, there was a dispute between the FCI and the Principal Auditors appointed by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). After an amendment in the Food Corporations Act, 1964 in May, 2000, the C&AG has become the sole auditor. The accounts of the FCI have since been certified by the C&AG upto the year 1999-2000 and laid in the both the Houses of Parliament. The position of finalisation of accounts for the last three years are as under :—

2000-01—The accounts have been adopted by the Board of Directors of FCI. The Audit Report of C&AG is awaited.